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Department of State TELEGRAM

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Saigon 6821 9-28-67

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EXCISE

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ACTION EA 19

INFO SP 02, SS 35, GPM 03, SC 01, NSC 10, RSC 01, SAL 01, CIA 04, NSAE 00,
INR 07, SAH 03, RSR 01, /087 W

R 250850Z SEP 67
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7524

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 6821

PASS WHITE HOUSE FOR ROSTOW

REF: [redacted]
B) SAIGON 6462
C) SAIGON 5024

SUBJ: ALLEGED VC SUPPORT FOR TRUONG DINH DZU

1. SINCE THE ELECTIONS SOME EVIDENCE OF VIET CONG SUPPORT FOR TRUONG DINH DZU HAS COME TO HAND. EMBASSY HAS RECEIVED A NUMBER OF REPORTS THAT VIET CONG IN SOME AREAS URGED PEOPLE TO VOTE FOR DZU. HOWEVER, EVIDENCE WHICH IS SO FAR AVAILABLE IS FRAGMENTARY, LARGELY UNCONFIRMED, AND IN PART CONTRADICTORY. MORE SUBSTANTIVE EVIDENCE MAY WELL APPEAR IN COMING WEEKS. HOWEVER, TAKEN TOGETHER, REPORTS CURRENTLY AVAILABLE DO NOT CONSTITUTE STRONG EVIDENCE THAT VC MOUNTED A COORDINATED NATION-WIDE EFFORT TO SUPPORT DZU, OR THAT A HIGH-LEVEL DECISION WAS MADE TO DO SO.

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2. REFERENCE A REPORTS VC ACTIVITY IN SUPPORT OF DZU IN

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY Joan Zenberg DATE 12/24/81
PORTIONS DENIED AS INDICATED

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VARIOUS DISTRICTS OF KIEN HOA, DINH TUONG AND KIEN PHONG PROVINCE (THE LATTER CARRIED BY DZU). VC ALLEGEDLY TOLD PEOPLE THAT DZU OPPOSED MILITARY GOVERNMENT AND CONSIDERED NLF BASICALLY NATIONALIST RATHER THAN COMMUNIST ORGANIZATION, AND THAT ELECTION OF DZU WOULD BE CONDUCIVE TO PEACE. IN SOME CASES VC REPORTEDLY USED STICK AS WELL AS CARROT, THREATENING VIOLENCE IF THEIR INSTRUCTIONS NOT FOLLOWED. REPORTS IN VARYING DETAIL OF SIMILAR VC ACTIVITY HAVE COME FROM SEVERAL OTHER III AND IV CORPS PROVINCES.

3. REFERENCE B REPORHL EMBOFF'S CONVERSATION WITH RECENT NVA DEFECTOR [ ] IN WHICH [ ] STATE THAT HEADQUARTERS OF VC MILITARY REGION VI DIRECTED ALL VC CADRE NOT DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN SABOTAGING ELECTION TO URGE PEOPLE TO VOTE FOR DZU. WE ARE NOT YET CERTAIN OF [ ] CREDENTIALS AS BONA FIDE COMMUNIST OFFICIAL. IF EVALUATION OF [ ] IS POSITIVE, AND IF HE IS NOT OTHERWISE LYING, HIS WILL BE FIRMEST

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EVIDENCE TO DATE OF A DELIBERATE HIGH-LEVEL DECISION BY VC TO SUPPORT DZU.

4. EVEN IF [ ] STATEMENT COULD BE CONFIRMED, NUMEROUS QUESTIONS AND AMBIGUITIES WOULD REMAINM. FOR EXAMPLE, WAS DECISION REACHED AT LEVEL HIGHER THAN MR VI, AND WAS IT TO BE PUT IN EFFECT COUNTRY-WIDE OR ONLY AS A CONTINGENCY MEASURE IN AREAS WHERE VC BELIEVED SABOTAGE TO BE OF LITTLE VALUE?

5. IT SEEMS MORE LIKELY THAT VC SUPPORT FOR DZU WAS LOCALIZED PHENOMENON, INDEPENDENT OF ANY DECISION BY COSVN OR HANOI. DZU'S RUNNING-MATE, TRAN VAN CHIEU, HAS ADMITTED (REF C) THAT DZU PROBABLY GOT SOME VC VOTES. HIS PLATFORM AND HIS CAMPAIGN, EMPHASIZING PEACE AND VIGOROUS ATTACK ON GVN, UNDOUBTEDLY APPEALED TO MANY CONFIRMED VC AND PEOPLE UNDER THEIR CONTROL AS IT APPARENTLY DID TO POPULATION AT LARGE. VC SUPPORT

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ALONE, EVEN IF IT WERE A WELL ORCHESTRATED, NATION-WIDE EFFORT WHICH SEEMS MOST UNLIKELY, COULD NOT ACCOUNT FOR DZU'S STRONG SHOWING. HIS SUPPORT WAS BY NO

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MEANS CONFINED TO AREAS WHERE VC INFLUENCE IS STRONG. IN ABSENCE OF MORE COMPLETE EVIDENCE, WE CONTINUE TO FEEL THAT MORE IMPORTANT FACTORS IN DZU'S VICTORY WERE HIS STRONG CAMPAIGN ORGANIZATION, INCLUDING TAN DAI VIET SUPPORT, HIS APPEALING PLATFORM AND HIS EXTREMELY EFFECTIVE CAMPAIGN STYLE

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